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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

PUBLIC **AI Index: ASA 21/72/99**

UA 181/99 **Arbitrary arrest/fear for safety** **27 July 1999**

EAST TIMOR **Seven people - names unknown**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of seven East Timorese people who were taken from the village of Faulara, near Sare, Liquica district, on 16 and 18 July 1999, and are now being held at local military command (Koramil) in the town of Maubara. The reason for their detention is unknown, but there are serious fears that they could be at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Another person is reported to have been killed during the militia operations in which the seven were detained.

All seven detainees are internally displaced people (IDPs) who are among some 3,000 people reported to be seeking refuge in Faulara from violence and intimidation by pro-integration militia groups. IDPs in the area are reported to have been threatened with violent reprisals by the militia group *Besih Merah Putih* (BMP - Iron Red and White) after humanitarian aid was distributed to the IDPs at the beginning of July. The convoy which delivered the aid was attacked by members of BMP in the town of Liquica on 4 July. A more recent attempt to reach IDPs in this area failed when local aid workers were turned back at a BMP roadblock on 24 July 1999.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The registration of voters for the August 1999 ballot on special autonomy for East Timor began on 16 July. Despite progress in the implementation of this UN conducted "popular consultation" process, and agreement by the Indonesian government that it would provide an environment for the process which is free from intimidation and other forms of violence, the security situation in East Timor continues to be serious. Pro-integration militia groups, supported by the military, are still operating in many districts. Levels of violence and intimidation are particularly high in the western districts of Liquica, Bobonaro, Covalima and Ainaro. In some areas, such as the area around the village of Sare, militia groups are almost in total control. To date only 13 members of militia groups are known to have been brought to trial for human rights violations.

Ongoing violence and intimidation continues to prevent many people who fled militia activity in the past months from returning to their homes. The number of IDPs is now estimated to be 40-60,000. Although small numbers of IDPs are reported to be returning to eastern districts such as Baucau and Viqeque, ongoing militia activity is preventing the tens of thousands of IDPs, concentrated in the districts of Covalima, Bobonaro and Liquica, from returning to their homes.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language:

- calling for clarification of the identity of the six IDPs currently being held in local military command in Maubara;
- calling for the six to be immediately released or handed over to the police who are the only agents with the power of arrest or detention in Indonesia and East Timor;
- urging the authorities to take immediate action to protect the security of all IDPs; including disarming and disbanding militia groups, and providing guarantees of security for IDPs so that they can return to their homes.

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APPEALS TO:
Commander Resort Military Command (KOREM) 164/Wiradharma
(covers East Timor)
Colonel Tono Suratman
Markas KOREM 164/Wiradharma
Dili, East Timor, Indonesia
Faxes + 62 390 321 544
Salutation: Dear Colonel Suratman

Minister of Defence and Security
General Wiranto
Menteri Pertahanan dan Keamanan
Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No. 13-14
Jakarta 10110
Indonesia
Fax: + 62 21 381 4535/384 5178
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:
President
President Jusuf Habibie
Presiden RI
Istana Negara
Jl Veteran, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia
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and to diplomatic representatives of INDONESIA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 September 1999.